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AUTHOR Benson, Gregory
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ABSTRACT

The New York State Education Department received a grant to develop an ERIC compatible educational resource data base containing descriptions of SEA funded projects. Sixty-seven percent of SEA representatives surveyed indicated they are currently or are considering building a data base, most using ERIC as a standard. A significant number were developing computer retrieval resource bases and indicated they would like their efforts to be computer compatible. Based on these results, the study recommended: (1) that the National Institute of Education (NIE) acknowledge the need for and fund additional SEA data base development efforts; (2) that efforts be coordinated; and (3) that NIE collect report formats and more detailed information. The survey form and list of responding SEA's are appended. (KP)

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A SURVEY TO DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF STATE EDUCATION AGENCY (SEA) EFFORTS TO DEVELOP DATA BASES OF SEA-FUNDED PROJECTS AND/OR EXEMPLARY PROJECTS AND PRACTICES

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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by
Gregory Benson

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

April, 1977

Educational Programs and Studies Information Service
Division of Research
New York State Education Department
Albany, New York 12234

IR004849

INTRODUCTION

The New York State Education Department received a National Institute of Education (NIE) Dissemination Capacity Building Grant in 1975. The major intent of this grant effort is to develop an ERIC-compatible educational resource containing descriptions of programs operating in New York State and of locally developed (in New York State) instructional materials.

The rationale for this effort is simply that the degree to which educational information is obtained and utilized effectively is directly related to the information relevancy (geographic and content) and ease of access to the information.

As the EPSIS unit of the New York State Education Department initiated efforts to develop a data base, it found a great deal of interest expressed by other SEA's. This interest was and is being expressed as requests for materials (formats, etc.), progress reports and consultative assistance. In addition, several SEA representatives have visited the EPSIS unit to discuss implementation of a similar educational resource base.

Lastly, interest has been expressed by all five Regional Exchanges since they are developing regional resource bases.

PROBLEM

NIE has indicated to the EPSIS unit that no other SEA's would receive significant funds under the Capacity Building Program to develop a resource base. This is apparently so due to the nature of the program itself and the fact that EPSIS was already funded to do this and other SEA's were to "wait and see" what the outcome of the New York project is.

Unfortunately this stance results in:

1. The incorrect assumption (as shown by this survey) that other SEA's can and will await the final outcome of the New York project before initiating resource development.

2. No organized effort by NIE to coordinate the resource development efforts or make arrangements for technical assistance in that regard.

3. A heavy burden on EPSIS staff caused by a significant number of detailed inquiries regarding the resource development. This problem has been brought to the attention of NIE and acknowledged as not solvable in the near future.

The EPSIS staff, having become aware of numerous efforts by SEA's to develop manual and/or computerized resource bases is concerned that these multitude of efforts ultimately be compatible which would result in a significant contribution to the existance of a comprehensive, national resource base.

THIS SURVEY

In an effort to determine just how many SEA's are developing resource bases and to get an indication as to how advanced they are, EPSIS staff undertook this brief survey of all SEA Dissemination Representatives and Capacity Building Project Directors (when they differed from the Dissemination Representative).

The cover letter and survey sheet are attached as Appendix A and the list of SEA's responding is attached as Appendix B.

This is certainly not a detailed nor sophisticated survey. However, as the survey results indicate, there is a significant amount of resource development activity in SEA's and attention to the recommendations generated by this survey is warranted.

THE SURVEY FINDINGS

- Total Responses - 39 responses representing 37 SEA's (74% of the States)
  Note: Michigan returned 3 survey forms

- 67% of the respondents indicated that they are (44%) or are contemplating (23%) building a program data base of projects funded by the SEA and/or exemplary projects or practices.

- Of those that are or are contemplating data base development, 77% indicated it is or will be ERIC compatible.

- Of those developing data bases, 21% indicated that they are computerized and an additional 12% indicated they will be computerized. At present, 67% are manual systems.

- Of those who are computerized or will be, 63% are developing loading programs.

- Of those who are or intend to have computer retrieval, only 10% are using a commercial vendor. The remainder are utilizing inhouse computer facilities or facilities of nearby educational agencies.

- Of those developing a data base, 65% indicated they have or will have a reporting format.

- Of those developing a data base, 56% indicated they have or will have a processing manual.

- 85% of all respondents expressed interest in a meeting whereby ultimate system compatibility could be insured. A third (33%) of those expressing interest in such a meeting indicated they could attend at their own expense.

CONCLUSIONS

1. SEA's around the county are finding it necessary to develop systematic resource bases containing descriptions of funded projects or exemplary projects or practices. This will come as no surprise to many since the availability of such a resource base is a logical extension of the delivery of ERIC.

   This need may simply be such an extension or it may be the pressure of economics, accountability and abundent educator inquiries which require easy access to successful programs. It might also reflect the management need to know what has been funded regardless of fund source.

Whatever the motivation, there is an undeniable effort to develop these resources in SEA's.

2. The standard or model after which the majority of these data base efforts are patterned is the ERIC system.

   This too will come as no surprise to many since ERIC is a highly viable model and one familiar to thousands of educators.

3. A significant number of SEA's are developing these resource bases with the intent of making them computer retrievable. Of those that are, the vast majority (90%) intend to utilize non-commercial vendors.

   Since these efforts are not being coordinated and most of the resultant data bases are to be run independently, there is an extremely high probability that the resultant data bases will not be compatible. This lack of compatibility will be reflected in reporting formats, tape formats, indexing procedures, loading programs and retrieval capability.

4. The vast majority of SEA representatives are interested in insuring the ultimate compatibility of these resource development efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That NIE acknowledge the need for and fund additional SEA efforts to develop program resource bases.

2. That the current and future SEA efforts be coordinated by NIE staff (Dissemination Resource Group - specifically Capacity Building Grant staff and ERIC staff).

3. That an immediate effort be made by NIE staff to collect reporting formats and more detailed information regarding the program resource base developmental efforts underway in SEA's.

4. That a session at the June, 1977 Dissemination Forum be devoted to discussing this issue and outlining steps to insure ultimate compatibility of efforts.

COMMENT

Over ten years ago the Federal level recognized the need for a national educational resource base. That recognition led to the development of ERIC. The growth and widespread use of ERIC is evidence of the concern and need that educators have for educational information.

Recently, SEA's have recognized the need to organize and make available programmatic information specific to their State. There is no reason to doubt that these efforts will grow or be used at a rate slower than ERIC. In fact, the evidence would indicate that the SEA resource bases will grow and be utilized at a rate that exceeds that of ERIC.

If these SEA efforts are coordinated and steps taken to insure compatibility with ERIC, they would represent a significant supplement to ERIC and would be a positive step toward a national data base of exemplary projects in the United States.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12234

APPENDIX A

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER FOR RESEARCH, PLANNING AND EVALUATION

DIVISIONS OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND STUDIES INFORMATION SERVICE

518: 474-3759

CURRICULUM LAB—ERIC SERVICE

February 1977

Dear State Dissemination Representative/Capacity Building Project Director:

As you may know, the Educational Programs and Studies Information Service (EPSIS) unit of the New York State Education Department has been awarded a grant by the National Institute of Education to set up two data bases. The Educational Programs data base will provide educators with a single access point for information that will facilitate the planning of their own programs. The Teacher Developed Materials (TDM) data base will provide teachers with a source of information about materials available for use in direct classroom instruction.

These data bases will both be computer retrievable and ERIC compatible. This is a coordinated effort to collect and organize information so that the development of similar materials throughout the State will be reduced to a minimum. This attempt to prevent expensive duplication will also promote cooperation between local districts as well as among program offices at the SEA level.

We are writing to you to determine the extent of other states efforts in this area so as to avoid duplication and future incompatibility among SEA's. We hope you will take a few minutes to answer the questions on the attached sheet. A pre-paid, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your help in promoting more comprehensive information services to all educators.

Sincerely,

Gregory Benson, Jr.
Coordinator, Educational Programs
and Studies Information Service

GB/mg
Enclosures

State Education Agency Survey: Resource Development

Contact Person _____

Address _____

1. Are you now building a Program Data Base of Programs funded by the State Education Agency and/or of exemplary projects or practices ☐ YES ☐ NO.

2. If No, are you contemplating such a project? ☐ YES NO ☐
   If Yes, when will you begin? _____

   If you have answered yes to either of the above questions, please go further and tell us:

3. Is your Program Information File ERIC compatible? ☐ YES NO ☐

4. The file is ☐ MANUAL Computerized ☐

5. If computerized, are you developing loading programs? ☐ YES NO ☐

6. Where do you intend to house the file for computer retrieval?

   ☐ COMMERICAL (which vendor?) _____
   ☐ OTHER (where?) _____

7. Do you have a reporting format? (If YES, please send)

   ☐ YES ☐ BEING DEVELOPED ☐ NO

8. Do you have a Processing Manual to explain procedures for reporting? (If YES, please send).

   ☐ YES ☐ BEING DEVELOPED ☐ NO

9. Would you be interested in a meeting whereby we could specifically discuss and have working sessions to insure the ultimate compatibility of our efforts?

   ☐ YES ☐ NO

10. If YES, could you attend a centrally located meeting at your own expense (no Federal support beyond what you have)?

    ☐ YES ☐ NO

11. COMMENTS:

APPENDIX B

SEA's Responding to Resource Development Survey

Alaska
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Florida
Georgia
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Kansas
Kentucky
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Puerto Rico
Rhode Island
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Vermont
Virgin Islands
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

NOTE: a survey form was also completed for N.Y.S.